

Meeting Summary

US 29 Central Corridor Advisory Committee Meeting #13

Tuesday, September 13, 2017, 6:30pm – 8:30pm
Silver Spring United Methodist Church, Scout Room
33 University Boulevard E., Silver Spring MD 20901

Participants

CAC Members (<i>X for in attendance, blank for regrets</i>)			
Louis Boezi		Brian Morrissey	
Marie-Michelle Bunch		Michael Pfetsch	X
Karen Evans	X	Ken Jones	X
Joseph Fox (represented by Sanjida Rangwala)	X	Michele Riley	X
Sean Gabaree		Eugene Stohlman	
Melissa Goemann		James Williamson	
Larry Goldberg	X	Teddy Wu	
Kevin Harris		James Zepp	
		Clifford Zinnes	
Jeffrey McNeil		Lori Zeller	X
Karen Michaels			

Staff

Darcy Buckley, MCDOT
Joana Conklin, MCDOT
Dan Hibbert, MCDOT
Dan Sheridan, MCDOT
Rick Kiegel, RK&K
Michael Weinberger, Foursquare ITP
Josh Diamond, Foursquare ITP
Sandy Klanfer, Foursquare ITP
William Shuldiner, Foursquare ITP/
MCDOT

Members of the Public

Tino Calabia
Shruti Bhatngar, Wheaton Resident
Stephanie Roy
Jeffery Land

Welcome

The meeting commenced at 6:35 pm.

Michael Weinberger, the meeting facilitator, welcomed the CAC members and thanked them for attending the meeting. He noted that attendance was lower than usual because several Central CAC members had a conflict and would be attending the South CAC meeting the following week. Michael informed the CAC members of updates to the CAC program plan. He described feedback from CAC members regarding the desire to spend additional time on some agenda items that had come up in previous CAC meetings. He said that because of this feedback, tonight's meeting would include an interactive exercise on pedestrian, bike, and local bus access.

Fall Outreach Activities Update

Michael provided an update on the team's outreach efforts. He shared a list of events that MCDOT has attended as part of the overall Public Involvement Plan (PIP). These events have taken place throughout the US 29 corridor and include National Night Out, the Silver Spring Farmers Market, and the Takoma Park Folklife Festival. He invited CAC members to email him with suggestions for additional events to attend or community organizations to talk to. He reminded CAC members that the next CAC meeting would take place in November and it would cover the preliminary design prior to the general open houses in the second week of November.

Environmental Documentation Update

A. Overview

Michael introduced Rick Kiegel, the consultant Project Manager for the US 29 BRT project, to provide an update on the project's environmental documentation.

Rick explained that because the US 29 BRT project is partially funded through the federal Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant, it is subject to environmental analysis and documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). On August 9, 2017, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) determined that the US 29 BRT project meets the criteria of a Class II listed Categorical Exclusion (CE). This was a requirement of the federally funded grant and an important milestone for the progress of the project design. A copy of the environmental documentation was shared with CAC members on August 10th and is available on the website, along with the approval and the 12 supporting

technical studies. The team will provide updates to CAC members on elements requiring additional follow-up as the design progresses.

B. Potential Hazardous Sites

One of the follow-up elements is hazardous materials. Rick explained that in a broad assessment of the corridor, nine sites along the corridor have been identified as areas in which there could be potential environmental hazards. The next step is to complete a Phase 1 environmental site assessment (ESA) to identify any potential hazardous materials. If MCDOT finds anything potentially harmful they will need to complete additional studies to determine what action needs to be taken.

C. Trees

Another follow-up element is trees along the corridor. Rick informed the CAC members that 94 street trees and three specimen trees were identified in station study areas. He defined street trees as the smaller trees that have been planted more recently and defined specimen trees as the larger, older trees. The number of trees affected will be reduced as the project determines the specific areas where construction will take place. Rick then described the process for replacing any trees that were affected by the project. For trees on a state highway right-of-way, there is a one-to-one replacement requirement. For trees on county properties, there is typically a three-to-one replacement requirement.

D. Stormwater Management

The final follow up element is stormwater management. Montgomery County's project team has determined a specified plan for analyzing stormwater management requirements along the corridor. Under this plan, each individual BRT station platform must have its own stormwater management mitigation process, instead of combining each platform area into a corridor level plan. More detail on treatment will be provided as the design advances.

Question (Q): I received a project information brochure that said the total cost to the county was about \$20 million. How much do the CACs cost? Are they included in the \$20 million?

Answer (A): Public Outreach is typically part of the overall project costs. Overall, running these groups represents a very small percentage of the cost of running the entire project and is also a small percentage of the outreach cost specifically.

Q: Is there a timeline for the remaining environmental work now that the initial FTA review is complete?

A: Environmental work will be finalized as the final design is completed and all environmental work must be completed before construction.

Community Improvement Hotspot Activity

A. Introduction

Michael Weinberger then introduced the Community Improvement Hotspot Activity. The Activity would take about an hour and a half and it was developed based on feedback from CAC members after previous meetings. Due to the nature of this activity, the notes from tonight's CAC would not only include the written summary but also scanned copies of the CAC members' note sheets and the maps that they used for the activity. All documents are available online to ensure that all CAC member feedback was accounted for.

B. Instructions

Michael then introduced Sandy Klanfer, from who facilitated the activity. Sandy re-stated the goals of the activity, such as greater communication between CAC members and project staff and increased understanding of the potential challenges on the US 29 corridor. He instructed the CAC members to divide into two groups before handing out the activity materials. Instructions were projected on a screen in the front of the room as a reminder.

In the activity, each team was given three sets of stickers for the three separate phases of the activity. The CAC members were instructed to use the color-coded stickers to answer questions about challenges to bicycle, pedestrian or transit operations in each of the assigned areas. The team was instructed to identify up with three locations for each question. Teams were formed and the activity commenced with Michael and Sandy helping as needed.

Note: Due to the small number of CAC members in attendance, members of the public were invited to participate in this activity.

C. Review of CAC Member Feedback

Each group worked for approximately thirty minutes on the first three questions that involved the strengths and challenges of biking in the area. Michael then invited each group to share their findings to each of the questions.

Bicycle Activity Phase:

1. *Where does biking feel unsafe?*

Group A: The group reported that they generally agreed that biking on US 29 felt unsafe throughout the area and expressed their communal dislike for bicycles that ride in the roadway as well as their desire for separate bike lanes. They noted the specific intersections that they thought posed problems to bikers:

- Intersection of US 29 and I-495, the Capital Beltway;
- Intersections of Stewart Lane and US 29; and
- Tech Road and US 29.

Group B: Colesville Road (US 29) and University Boulevard both generally feel unsafe because of fast traffic and discontinuous sidewalks, especially in the Four Corners area. The group also said that the interchange of the Capital Beltway and New Hampshire Avenue was not a safe place for bikes.

2. *Where do people like to bike in the community?*

Group A: Martin Luther King Park Recreation Center and Sligo Creek areas were among the most popular for biking.

Group B: The group described the places in the community where people enjoyed biking. They cited Lanark Way, Sligo Creek trail, Martin Luther King trail, and general residential areas as the most popular areas amongst bikers. They also said that many people use Dennis Avenue and Lanark Way as bike corridors when biking in the area.

3. *Where would you like to see bikeshare stations?*

Group A: Bikeshare stations would be best located on the campus of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), in downtown Silver Spring (for use when traveling north), and at White Oak, because one could bike to the FDA campus from there.

Group B: The group wanted bikeshare stations as close to the new BRT station at Four Corners as possible, at the intersection of Dennis Avenue and US 29, Holy Cross, Forest Glen, White Oak, White Oak library, Burnt Mills shopping center and the FDA.

Q: Is it legal to bike on the sidewalk in Montgomery County?

A: Yes, it is legal to bike on the sidewalk anywhere in Montgomery County.

Pedestrian Activity Phase:

The activity resumed for another 30 minutes before Michael asked the groups to present their response to the pedestrian activity.

1. *What are the most pleasant places to walk in your community?*

Group B: Neighborhoods with larger sidewalks, trails, and downtown Silver Spring are the most pleasant places to walk.

Group A: The team stated that their answers were similar to the first group's, but also included Old Columbia Pike north of New Hampshire Avenue and the Northwest Branch of the spillway as pleasant places to walk.

2. *Where does walking feel unsafe?*

Group B: Neighborhoods without sidewalks or sufficient lighting, especially Colesville Road and University Boulevard due to their uneven sidewalks and expansive tree routes that can provide a hazard to pedestrians, especially in inclement weather. In addition to these areas, intersections where people need to cross US 29 but where there are no crosswalks are generally unsafe. The group also cited crime in certain shopping centers as a deterrent to pedestrians.

Group A: The overpass over New Hampshire Avenue on US 29, as well as Tech Road when crossing US 29.

3. *What places do you think would benefit from new pedestrian amenities, such as new or improved sidewalks, crosswalks, or improved lighting?*

Group B: Greater pedestrian connectivity is needed in the Four Corners area, specifically at Lanark Way and US 29, as well as Lorain Avenue and University Boulevard, North Four Corners Park and University Boulevard. The group said that signaled pedestrian crossings at future BRT stations would be helpful and said that there should be more connectivity between the Burnt Mills neighborhood and the Burnt Mills shopping center in the northern part of the corridor.

Group A: Regarding crosswalks and lighting, the team said reflector signs or poles would make crossing the Capital Beltway on US 29 safer. The group also cited the intersection at Indian

Springs Drive and US 29 as a place that could be made safer with improved pedestrian amenities.

Michael then asked the CAC members if they had any general concerns related to the Americans with Disabilities Act in the area. The CAC members replied that many of the sidewalks in the area are not good for people with disabilities and that there are stretches of the road with no sidewalks, which makes it hard when getting off the bus. The group recommended that future BRT stations have sidewalks leading up to them that are maintained, otherwise the level boarding feature of the BRT system will be ineffective. Lastly, they said that more signage or enforcement is needed to prevent people from parking in the areas of the road designated for bus stops. When people park in these areas, the bus cannot use the ramp designed to assist people with disabilities, especially at the stop across the street from 11550 Stewart Lane. **Note:** A visiting representative from WMATA's Accessibility Advisory Committee, requested that ADA issues on the corridor be noted for feedback purposes.

Transit Activity Phase:

The activity resumed for another 30 minutes during which the groups discussed questions relating to public transit in the area.

1. *What bus stops could benefit from new amenities such as shelters or benches?*

Group A: The stop across the street from 11550 Stewart Lane needs a new bench. The team noted that stops that needed new shelters included the Motor Vehicle Association on Industrial Parkway; Dale Drive and US 29 on both sides of the street; and Sligo Creek Parkway and US 29 southbound. The team also stated the need for a Z2 stop at Stewart Lane and US 29.

Group B: The group cited the bus shelters at Four Corners needing improvement to accommodate more passengers. There were requests for new shelters on New Hampshire Avenue at the Long Branch Library and at Denison University.

2. *What bus stops would you describe as problematic?*

Group A: The team cited the stop at southbound US 29 and Lorain Avenue as a place where buses are too full and do not stop to pick up passengers. Additionally, for buses turning south on US 29 from Industrial Drive, the box is often blocked by traffic so the group recommended moving this stop to the intersection Tech Road and US 29.

Group B: The group described the stop at US 29 and Crestmoor Drive as a particularly problematic. Although it has been improved, this group felt that it is still not accessible by sidewalks or crosswalks. Additionally, many of the transfers at Four Corners are far away and difficult to make in a timely manner. The group also said the YMCA/Indian Springs stop is problematic because there is not a crosswalk and many people must run across the street in an unsafe manner.

3. *What intersections would benefit from Transit Signal Priority (TSP)?*

Group A: The team said the intersections that would benefit from Transit Signal Priority (TSP) include the Burnt Mills Shopping Center and northbound US 29 at the Industrial Shopping Center. Additionally, they recommended using TSP to allow the buses to turn into the Silver Spring Transit Center once they are south of Spring Street in downtown Silver Spring.

Group B: While expressing that TSP may not help in many places because traffic is too heavy, they said that Sligo Creek and Burnt Mills were intersections that may benefit.

Michael thanked the CAC members for their participation in the activity and expressed that the feedback MCDOT had received would be very helpful as they continued to design the new BRT system. He reminded the members that some of the feedback was not within the scope of the BRT project, but assured them that the project team would forward their concerns to the appropriate offices at MCDOT to support future planning activities along the corridor. He then concluded the project and moved on to next steps.

Q (from an interested party): Can ADA compliance could be addressed at future meetings.

A: Staff can discuss making time for this issue at future meetings.

Next Steps

Michael announced that the next US 29 BRT Central CAC meeting would take place during the week of November 6, 2017. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Community Hotspot Activity Notes

Central CAC

Sandy group

GetOnBoardBRT  US 29
BUS RAPID TRANSIT IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Which intersections do you think would benefit from Transit Signal Priority? Use your blue bus stickers to answer this question.

1. Turn into transit center asap (once the bus is south of ~~Spring St~~ Spring St on 29)

~~South of Spring St~~

Northbound 29 at Burnt Mills shopping center

Northbound 29 @ Industrial ~~PKwy~~ / Tech Ed

2.

3.

Where do people like to bike in your community? Use your green bicycle stickers to answer this question.

1. ~~NAM~~ People do not like to bike along this section of 29. It's a busy road w/ a lot of traffic.

We do think people would bike in the MLK park/recreation area.

2.

3.

Where does biking feel unsafe? Use your yellow bicycle stickers to answer this question.

1. On route 29 generally, but especially dangerous at Stewart Lane crossing of 29 and Tech Road crossing of 29.

2. Crossing beltway on 29 is VERY dangerous.

3. We think it is unsafe for bikes to ride in the road on 29. We do not like the bikes being allowed in the lane on 29.

Where would you like to see bikeshare stations? Use your blue bicycle stickers to answer this question.

1. FDA campus - They could ride bikes around in there

2. Downtown SS - bikes could go to Sligo Creek to ride

White Oak:

3. Take bus/BRT to White Oak and then you could get a bikeshare bike to ride to FDA.

Aside:

On Stewart Lane there are problems w/ BRT.
3. Call Jeffrey Land about Stewart Lane & Lockwood Dr. issues.

What are the most pleasant places to walk in your community? Use your green pedestrian stickers to answer this question.

1. Sligo Creek Parkway

Downtown SS

Old Columbia Pike (North of NH Ave)

Northwest Branch (@ spillway)

2.

3.

What places feel unsafe to walk? Use your yellow pedestrian stickers to answer this question.

1. overpass over NH Ave on Route 29.

Tech Road crossing Rt 29.

~~Fairland Road crossing 29. There is
no sidewalk on Fairland east of 29~~

2. _____

3. _____

What places do you think would benefit from new pedestrian amenities, such as new or improved sidewalks, crosswalks, or improved lighting? Use your blue pedestrian stickers to answer this question.

1. - Fairland Road crossing w/ 29 on the east side of 29 - need sidewalk
- Need sidewalk on NH Ave ~~and~~ south of White Oak library.
- Beltway and 29 > reflector poles
crossing signs
rumble strip
2. - Pedestrian crossing on 29 ~~between~~
between beltway and Franklin
could use more flashing lights/signage
Ped crossing @ Old SSL library needs
new ~~new~~ signage/lights/markings.

3. _____

What bus stops in your community could benefit from amenities such as shelters or benches? Use your green bus stickers to answer this question.

1. ^{in bus stop} Need a bench across from 11550 Stewart Lane

Need ^{shelter} Bus stop across from MVA on Industrial Parkway

Need shelter @ Dale & 29 on Southbound side

Need shelter @ Sig & 29 (N & S bound)

Put a bus stop for ~~E2~~ E2 North & SB
2. at Stewart Lane & 29

3.

and Ride on 10 Industrial Dr.
What bus stops in your community are problematic? Use your yellow bus stickers to answer this question.

1. ~~Bus 26~~ turning ~~S~~ onto 29 from Tech Road
gets stuck b/c NB traffic blocks the
box & bus can't turn. So maybe move
bus stop to Tech Road.

Bus stop SB on 29 @ Lorain has many
passengers, buses are full and can't
stop. Need more buses.

2.

3.

[illegible]



Where do people like to bike in your community? Use your green bicycle stickers to answer this question.

1. Sligo Creek Trail

2. Lanark - gives access to trail, Four Corners

3. within all the neighborhoods - safe here

people commute down 29 to Metro - brave souls
commuters bike across Dennis, through Edgewood to White Oak
MLK Park

Where does biking feel unsafe? Use your yellow bicycle stickers to answer this question.

1. all of Colesville, University
- discontinuous sidewalks all along corridor

FOUR CORNERS

2. Beltway ramps

3. interchange @ N Hampshire

Where would you like to see bikeshare stations? Use your blue bicycle stickers to answer this question.

1. FOUR CORNERS - as near to the BRT
stations as possible

2. Holy Cross Hospital / Dennis Ave + University /
~~Arundel~~ Kemp Mill / Schweinhart Senior Center /

3. White Oak

Other nearby station locations:

- FDA

- April Lane Rec Center

- White Oak Lib.

- MLK Park

+ Brent Mills

What bus stops in your community are problematic? Use your yellow bus stickers to answer this question.

1. The worst bus stop in America!
And all other bus stops that have no
sidewalks leading towards them and/or
no safe crossings to access them

2. Transfers in 4 corners require
lots of inconvenient crossing

3. YMCA / Indian Springs
crossing is terrible

What bus stops in your community could benefit from amenities such as shelters or benches? Use your green bus stickers to answer this question.

1. Dennis + University -shelters

2. Expand all shelters in Four Corners to provide
adequate all-season coverage since these
are high demand

3. New Hampshire @ library

Which intersections do you think would benefit from Transit Signal Priority? Use your blue bus stickers to answer this question.

1. Sligo Creek

2. Burnt Mills

3. _____

What places feel unsafe to walk? Use your yellow pedestrian stickers to answer this question.

1. within neighborhoods:
 - lots of streets w/o sidewalks
 - unlit streets @ night
2. Colesville + University are unsafe bc
traffic travels very fast and it travels
very close to peds / narrow sidewalks

HOWEVER! These are heavily traveled
roads - lots of people do it bc they have
to. MUST BECOME SAFER in order
to more safely accommodate everyone.
uneven sidewalks - not well maintained - snow shoveling
3. other safety concerns
 - Many places along Colesville where people
need to cross and they do so unsafely due
to poor ped facilities
 ↑ sometimes they need to cross because of
 getting on or off a bus
 - concerns about crime

Sidewalk missing on 29 - worst bus stop
in America! - Crestmoor / Woodmoor

What places do you think would benefit from new pedestrian amenities, such as new or improved sidewalks, crosswalks, or improved lighting? Use your blue pedestrian stickers to answer this question.

1. Greater ped connectivity throughout F. Corners
 - Lanark @ 29
 - Lorain @ University
 - North Fair Corners Park @ University
 - crossing (signalized) needed @ BRT stops on 29
2. complete sidewalk connectivity - Burnt Mills neighborhood to shopping center
3. safely cross 29 @ Oak Leaf Dr

What are the most pleasant places to walk in your community? Use your green pedestrian stickers to answer this question.

1. within neighborhoods, traffic is slow enough
mostly - lots of ppl walk around these
neighborhoods (see first unsafe item)

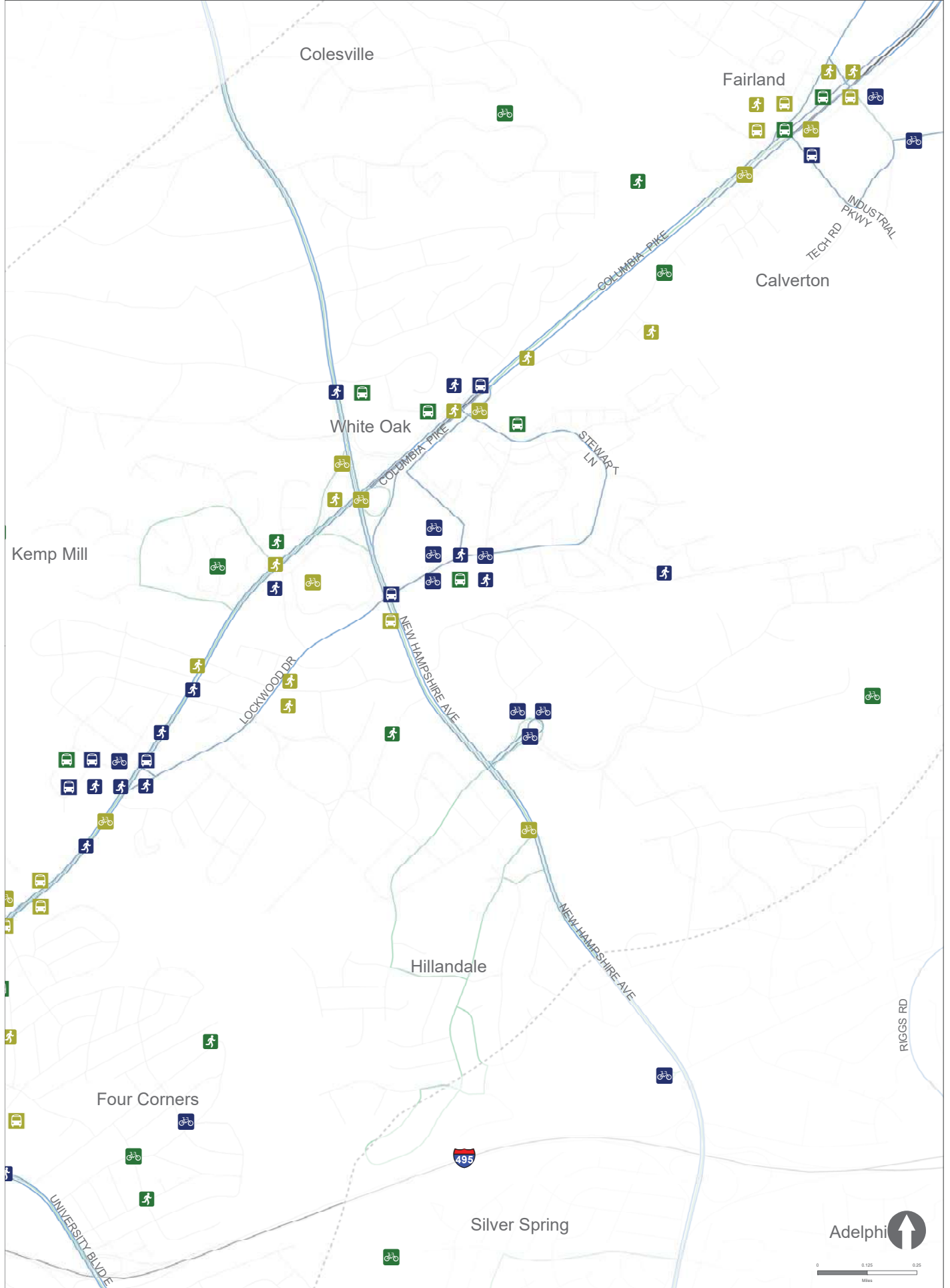
2. all parks! + trails

3. Downtown Silver Spring



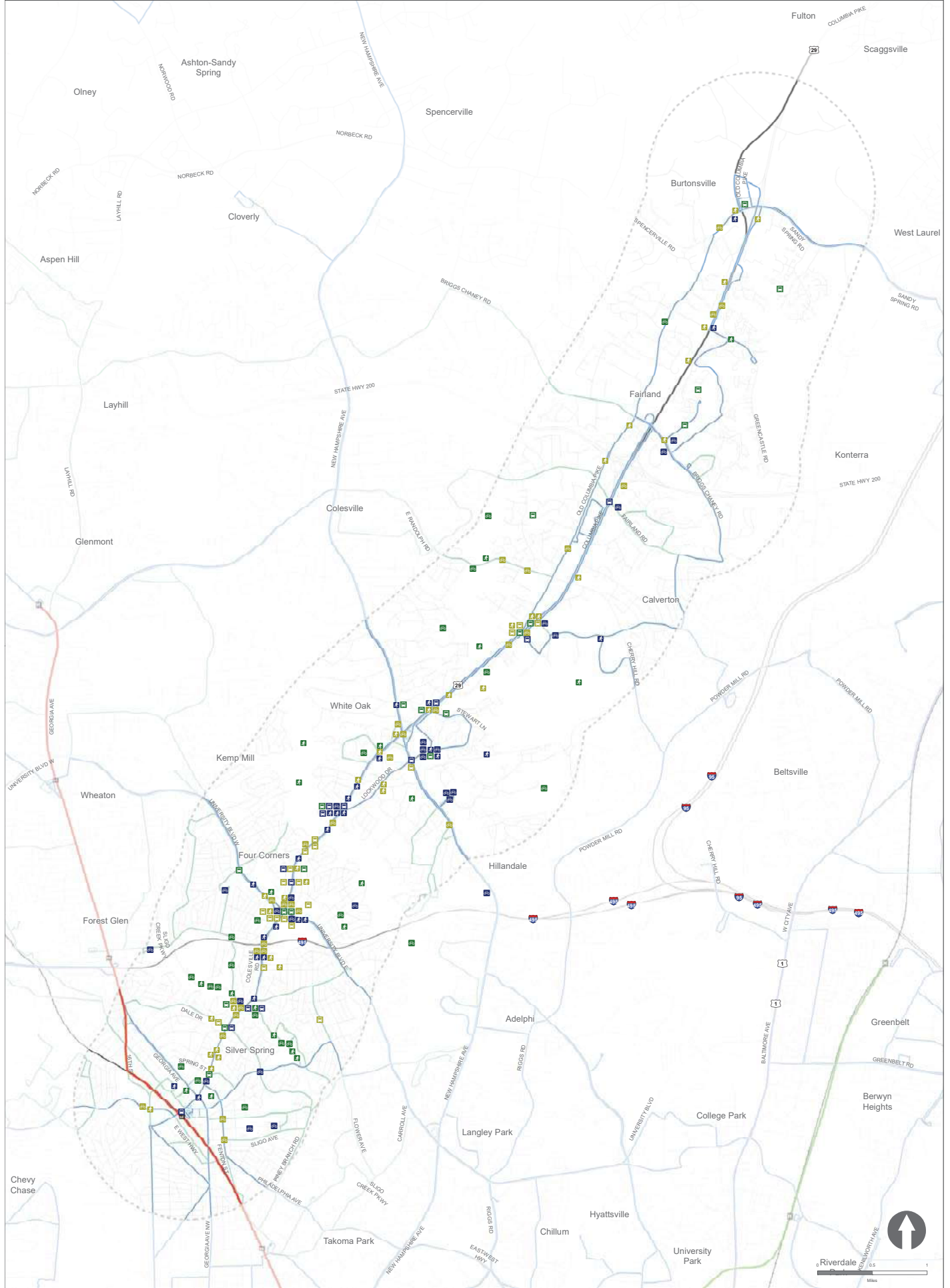


Community Hotspot Activity Maps



Community Hotspot Activity Results (Burnt Mills -- White Oak -- Tech Road)

Bicycling Strength	Bus Strength	Pedestrian Strength	Ride On Routes	Metrorail	Bus Rapid Transit
Bicycling Constraint	Bus Constraint	Pedestrian Constraint	Metrobus Routes	Red Line	Study Corridor
Bicycling Opportunity	Bus Opportunity	Pedestrian Opportunity		Station	



Community Hotspot Activity Results

